

# Initiatives



*NRCS has a vision that neighbors working together locally is the best foundation for effective land stewardship. The next step in taking care of the land is for rural and urban residents to jointly accept that everybody is somebody's neighbor. Shared responsibility is the key.*

## ***The Grazing Lands Coalitions Initiative (GLCI)***

The **Colorado Private Grazing Lands Coalition** is a voluntary effort to enhance the health and sustainability of 21 million acres of privately owned grazing lands by increasing technical and educational assistance at the grassroots level.

GLCI ensures that technical, educational, and related assistance is provided to those who manage private grazing lands. It is not a cost-share program. It is a process in which technical assistance is available.

### ***GLCI Support in 2002***

The **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** in Colorado continues to support and work with the **Colorado Grazing Lands Coalition**. The coalition is made up of private producers with agency advisors.

- NRCS technical assistance has resulted in producers planning 719,619 acres of prescribed grazing systems and applying prescribed grazing systems on 539,714 acres.
- There are 15 active **Grazing Lands Demonstration projects** in Colorado involving 18 host producers.
- In Colorado, NRCS made 22 grazing lands management presentations at workshops, tours, and field days, educating over 803 conservationists and land managers.

- NRCS continues to update ecological site descriptions and forage suitability group descriptions in Colorado.
- FY-2002 allocations earmarked for GLCI activities totaled \$449,000. \$40,000 was provided to the GLCI coalition for **Grants Demonstration Projects program and information and education**; the remaining allocation funds were used to support technical staff.

## ***Salinity Program***

The **Colorado River Basin** encompasses portions of seven states: **Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, and California**. The river flows for more than 1,400 miles from its headwaters in Wyoming and Colorado to the Gulf of California in Mexico. The Colorado River provides municipal and industrial water for more than 18 million



people, and irrigation water for approximately 1.7 million acres in the U.S.

A major concern in the Colorado River Basin is the threat of salinity in both the United States and the Republic of Mexico.

To combat this problem, USDA implemented the **Colorado River Basin Salinity Control (CRBSC) Program** in 1985. *The initiative includes NRCS offices in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.*

Progress is still being made, although the salinity program no longer exists. This program was canceled as a result of the 1996 Farm Bill. However, the goals of the salinity program were included in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

#### **Status Report (Colorado only) Salt Saving FY-1988-FY2002**

Federal funds invested _____	<b>\$73.7 million</b>
Salt reduction in Colorado River _____	<b>170,041 tons/year</b>
Salt reduction goal _____	<b>344,000</b>
Percentage of goal attained _____	<b>50 %</b>

### **Backyard Conservation**

Backyard conservation is one of Colorado's successful conservation education programs. It illustrates that conservation practices used on agricultural land across the country to conserve and improve natural resources can be adapted to the land around someone's home. These practices help the environment while making neighborhoods more attractive and enjoyable.

### **Plant Materials**

Numerous NRCS programs require the proper selection of plant materials in order to gain the full benefit of planned management or conservation practices. The Upper Colorado Environmental Plant Center (UCEPC) cooperates with agencies to produce the highest quality plants for identified conservation problems.

Changes in the farm program and environmental standards are increasing demand from private landowners, the general public, and partner agencies for more information on conservation plants. Studies dealing with the collection, propagation, establishment, and evaluation of various plant materials are under way. These studies will result in new plant technology and plant varieties, and will address specific conservation problems. High priority concerns include:

- Revegetation of disturbed lands
- Increased productivity and conservation of rangeland, pasture land, and grazeable woodland for livestock and wildlife

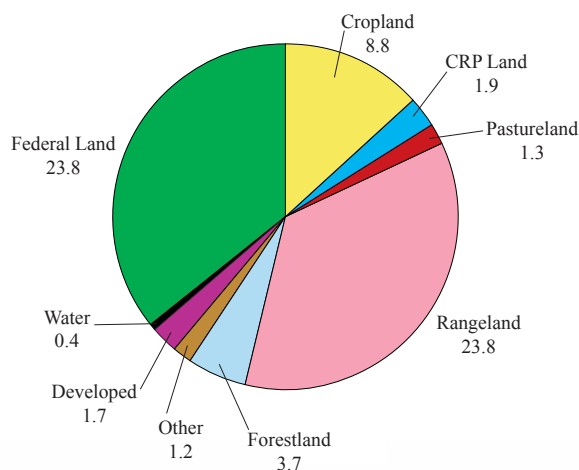
- Improved riparian and wetland habitat for controlling upland stream erosion and enhancing wildlife habitat
- Enhancement of water quality and water conservation

New conservation and demonstration plantings are being initiated on farms and ranches in cooperation with conservation districts. These evaluation plantings provide testing under actual field conditions and provide hands-on training.

***For more information, contact the UCEPC or visit your local USDA service center.***

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5538 Rio Blanco County Road 4  
PO Box 448  
Meeker CO 81641  
(970) 878-5003  
E-mail [plant@cmn.net](mailto:plant@cmn.net)

### **Colorado Land Use**



### **The National Resources Inventory (NRI)**

The National Resources Inventory (NRI) is a statistically-based survey that has been designed and implemented using scientific principles to assess conditions and trends of soil, water, and related resources on non-Federal lands in the United States. The 1997 NRI captures data on land cover and use, soil erosion, prime farmland, wetlands, habitat diversity, selected conservation practices, and related resource attributes at more than 7,400 scientifically selected sample sites in Colorado.

*NRI results cannot be compared to Census Bureau, Census of Agriculture, or other established surveys because the classification systems and protocols used by the various surveys are not compatible.*

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